

*International Education: The Basque Land:  
A Case Study on the Family  
Character Education: Hope*

The Idaho State Department of Education is dedicated to increasing the technical capability, social readiness, and global perspective of high school graduates in order that they will complete school with the character, skills, and knowledge to become responsible and productive citizens in their community, state, nation and world. The following lesson on the Basque Country integrates one of Clifton Taulbert's *Eight Habits of the Heart* "to incite your memory and passion so that you can employ your imagination in the building of good communities for the twenty-first century."

Taulbert, Clifton. (1997). *Eight Habits of the Heart*. New York, New York: Penguin Books.

*Within the community, hope is believing in tomorrow –  
because you have learned to see with your heart. Talbert, p. 89*

This lesson can take from one class period to one week, depending on which elements you include.

**I. Content:**

I want my students to be able to:

- A. Develop a basic understanding of Basque land, its history and present-day culture.
- B. Understand the addition to Idaho's diversity that Basque immigrants have made.
- C. Develop a thorough understanding of the concept of theme.
- D. Recognize the themes of the value of family and hope for future generations to themselves and apply those themes to the Basque culture and, then to their own lives in a personal narrative.

**II. Prerequisites:**

The students should have:

- A. A general understanding of narrative mode.
  - 1. Definitions or access to definitions of theme and plot elements.
  - 2. Experience with a variety of short stories and familiar narratives.
- B. An understanding of point of view
- C. An understanding of our country as a nation of immigrants. (tie to US History 9 curriculum)

**III. Instructional Objectives(s):**

The student will:

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- A. Expand knowledge of the human condition and experience.
- B. Understand the concept of theme, and identify themes within cultures, and literary works.
- C. Identify primary differences between fiction and non-fiction.
- D. Write for purpose and audience
- E. Write in order to generate, record, and reflect upon ideas.
- F. Apply the six traits of effective writing: ideas, voice, organization, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

**IV. Materials and Equipment:**

*Teacher:*

- 1. Lesson Packet—this printed **Course of Study**
- 2. Powerpoint presentation *The Basque Land* (attached)—**Teacher Handout #1**
- 3. Web sites
- 4. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_people) A brief history and summary of the Basque land, history, and a) culture.
- 5. Smartboard, projector, or large monitor (optional)
- 6. Card Game template—**Teacher Handout #2**
- 7. Sample “Collect Themes” playing deck—**Teacher Handout #3**

*Student:*

- 1. Basque Knowledge Check—**Student Handout #1**
- 2. Game Cards—**Teacher Handout #3**
- 3. Personal Narrative graphic organizer—**Student Handout #2)**
- 4. Computer with card template (optional)

**V. Instructional Procedure:**

- A. Provide background knowledge
  - 1. Allow the students to assess their own understanding of the Basque land, and then develop a more thorough background knowledge using the “Basque Knowledge Check—**Student Handout #1**. The students first answer on their own, and then they should collaborate with each other and develop more complete answers.
  - 2. After this initial step, the class can watch the Basque Powerpoint with teacher narration if possible. As they watch, they should be able to fill in missing answers. (If a projector or large screen is not available, you could provide the slide show as a handout—**Teacher Handout #1**.

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3. Finally the teacher should guide the class through a review of the questions, to check for understanding.
- B. The teacher can then reemphasize the theme of family in the Basque culture. The slide on the farmhouse and the last three slides exemplify this value. Basque families welcome the young and the old into all aspects of life. The elderly rarely live in homes, but with family. Children are welcomed in the parks and city centers, and facilities are designed with their needs in mind. Public education is seen as a priority, and the budget for education and social services make up 2/3 of the total budget. This ties easily into Clifton Taulbert's idea of the *Eight Habits of the Heart*. Taulbert sees hope as a belief that one's children will "make good." Those positive expectations, according to Taulbert, often help young people succeed. Basque culture has maintained the hope for a good future for children through the times of war, immigration, and into the present day. Hope and high expectations for future generations can also be seen as a **theme** within Basque culture. (This portion may include some class discussion of the value that most modern-day Americans put on family. It is often interesting to hear student's opinions on this subject.)
- C. Now review the concept of **theme** with the class. Theme is an insight about human life. The term is most often used to refer to a literary work. Theme is usually not stated outright, but the reader needs to infer it after considering the work. I like to help students understand this difficult concept by contrasting theme with plot by saying that plot is "what happens" while theme is "what it's about". Yet theme is more than just the subject of the work; it is more what the writer wants to express about that subject. For example, family may be a subject within Basque culture, but the inherent value of family, and the hope that the Basque have for their children is one theme of that culture.
- D. To reinforce the concept of theme, have the students develop their own card deck based on theme. It would be good at this time to remind the students of the Fournier Playing Card Museum in Vitoria, Spain. The Fournier Playing Card Company has been making cards for decades, and the museum has examples of card decks from many countries. They also have many decks that were designed as teaching tools. They have decks that were used to teach mythology, music, literature, math, and many other subjects.
1. Use the template attached (**Teacher Handout #2**) to have students design cards based on various themes from literature. It would be best if the kids could use short stories and books that they have read themselves. It's important to note that the

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“theme” will be simplified to include at least four narratives with like themes.

- a) You might brainstorm as a class a list of possible stories, books, movies, and themes that students could use.
  - b) I would suggest that each student design a theme book. (A "book" in this game is made up of four cards with the same theme.)
  - c) The level of illustration is up to you and your time constraints.
  - d) If computers are available, students could design the cards using Microsoft Word.
2. If you don't have time to let the students design the decks, print the one provided.
  3. Let the students play “Catching Themes”. Rules for the game are attached—**Student Handout #3**. (same as “Go Fish”)
- E. Next have the students reflect on Taulbert's idea of **Hope** as a necessary “habit of the heart”, and how their own families or communities have shown a “hope” for them. For some students, the school community is the most nurturing family they have. Students can always use that as an example. One good method of sharing is a “go around”. Students can break into small groups and sit in circles to share. Go around the circle and allow each student to share his/her opinion. Students may pass if they chose to do so, and then have an opportunity later on if they are ready. Everyone else must be quiet and listen while someone is talking. Some discussion starters follow:
1. What “hopes” does your family have for you? How do you know?
  2. What has your family done to help make their hopes and dreams for you possible?
  3. How do you feel about the “hopes” that your families hold for you? What do you plan to do about them?
- F. As a summative assessment, have student write a personal narrative on the “hope” that their family has for them. It may be a story that “shows” high expectations, like when a child was compelled to return the stolen candy and apologize, or the baseball season where dad spent many evenings out in the yard pitching the ball until finally the child made a hit. It might also be a missed hope, where family expectations weren't high, and a student was disappointed. In that case, perhaps the student could reflect on how they might change that for their own children. As always, students should follow the steps of process writing. I've attached a graphic organizer (**Student Handout #3**) for the prewriting stage. If possible, the narratives can be collected and bound.

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**VI. Assessment and Evaluation:**

- A. Formative assessment
  - 1. Basque Knowledge Check (**Student Handout #1**)
  - 2. Theme playing cards (**Teacher Handout #3**)
- B. Summative assessment
  - 1. Personal narrative

**VII. Idaho Achievement Standards:**

Standard 2: Comprehension /Interpretation

**Goal 2.3: Acquire Skills for Comprehending Literary Text**

9.LA.2.3.5 Compare and contrast themes across works of prose, poetry, and drama

Standard 3: Writing Process

**Goal 3.1: Acquire Prewriting Skills**

9.LA.3.1.3 Apply organizational strategies to plan writing.

9.LA.3.1.4 Match format to purpose and audience

9.LA.3.1.5 Produce a piece of writing within a set period of time

**Goal 3.2: Acquire Skills for Writing a Draft**

9.LA.3.2.1 Use the ideas generated and organized through prewriting to write a draft.

**Goal 3.3: Acquire Skills for revising a draft**

9.LA.3.3.1 Revise draft for meaning, clarity, and effective organization.

9.LA.3.3.2 Add relevant details and delete irrelevant or redundant information.

**Goal 3.5: Acquire Skills to Publish Writing**

9.LA.3.5.1 Publish improved draft

Standard 4: Writing Applications

**Goal 4.1: Acquire Expressive (Narrative/Creative) Writing Skills**

9.LA.4.1.1 Write reflective autobiographical narratives or short stories that explore the significance of personal experiences and communicate the significance of events.

**VIII: Follow Up or Extension Activities**

- A. Present the personal narratives orally
- B. Either bind the narratives individually, or as a collection
- C. Have students develop a computer presentation on their own culture, reflecting the strongest values found in that culture.
- D. Cook a Basque recipe or two and share it with the class. You could include some research into Basque cuisine  
<http://www.buber.net/Basque/Food/Recipes>

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- E. Learn some basic words in Basque. A few are included on the Powerpoint slide show. Students could make a deck of cards to learn the Basque vocabulary [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque\\_language](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_language)



# The Basque Country

The Value of Family

Theme:	Theme:	Theme:
Source:	Source:	Source:
Theme:	Theme:	Theme:
Source:	Source:	Source:
Theme:	Theme:	Theme:
Source:	Source:	Source:



Theme: Love is Most Important



Source: *Romeo & Juliet*

Theme: Love is Most Important



Source: "The Gift of the Magi"

Theme: Love is Most Important



Source: "Uncle Marcos"

Theme: Love is Most Important



Source: *Cinderella*

Theme: Growing Up & Understanding



Source: "Humaweepee the Warrior Priest"

Theme: : Growing Up & Understanding



Source: "Before the End of Summer"

Theme: : Growing Up & Understanding



Source: *Hope Was Here*

Theme: : Growing Up & Understanding



Source: *The Outsiders*

Theme: Tolerance and Prejudice



Source: : *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*

### **Basque Knowledge Check**

The following questions are designed to get you thinking about the Basque land and some of the aspects of the Basque culture. (a) First read through the questions and answer them as best you can. It's ok to guess at this point; we're just checking what you already know. (b) Next pair up with one or two other students and share information. (c) Finally, watch the slide show and fill in any answers you might have missed.

1. What two countries include what is know as the "Basque Land"?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. What language do they speak there?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
3. Where is the largest community of Basques located in North America today?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
4. What is the name of the famous museum in Bilbao, Spain?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
5. What famous factory can be found in Vitoria, Spain?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
6. What is the name of the Basque national game?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
7. How do the Basques feel about family?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

Graphic Organizer for Personal Narrative on Hope

Audience	Voice	Tone	Pt. Of View

Climax (turning point):

Rising Action:

Rising Action:

Rising Action:

Rising Action:

Falling Action:

Resolution:

Exposition  
Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Place: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Mood:

Conflict: (Should reflect a “hope” for you from your family/support system. It may or may not be fulfilled)

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### Catch a Theme

This game, otherwise known as **Fish**, is best for 3-6 players, but it is possible for 2 to play. A deck of 52 cards is used. The dealer deals 5 cards to each player (7 each for 2 players). The remaining cards are placed face down to form a stock.

The player to dealer's left starts. A turn consists of asking a specific player for a specific theme. For example, if it is my turn I might say: "Mary, please give me your love is most important theme cards". The player who asks must already hold at least one card of the requested theme, so I must hold at least one jack to say this. If the player who was asked (Mary) has cards of the named theme (love is primary in this case), she must give **all** her cards of this theme to the player who asked for them. That player then gets another turn and may again ask any player for any theme already held by the asker.

If the person asked does not have any cards of the named theme, they say "Surprise Ending!". The asker must then draw the top card of the undealt stock. If the drawn card is the theme asked for, the asker shows it and gets another turn. If the drawn card is not the rank asked for, the asker keeps it, but the turn now passes to the player to the right.

As soon as a player collects a book of 4 cards of the same theme, this must be shown and discarded face down. The game continues until either someone has no cards left in their hand or the stock runs out. The winner is the player who then has the most books.

Another variation is **Catch a Theme** without the stock pile. All the cards are dealt out as equally as possible to the players. A turn consists of asking a player for a specific theme. If they have it your turn continues; if not the turn passes to the player you asked. As in **Catch a Theme**, you must have a card of the theme you asked for. Books of 4 cards are discarded. The game continues until all the cards are formed into books, and whoever gets most books wins - or you can score one point per book and play to a target score.